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of anything commonplace or hackneyed in diction, his desire for words and metaphors that will bite and tell are carried to a point that would be harshness in prose. This characteristic of Vergil has not been even remotely imitated in any translation that I know. In school translations everything tends to be smoothed away, blurred and effaced. Tennyson uses words as Vergil does when he writes of "breasting the blows of circumstance", or speaks of trees as "clothing their branchy bowers with fifty Mays", or writes "Climb thy thick noon, disastrous day". Imagine commonplace expressions substituted for all these unusual ones. Yet this is what happens to Vergil in our schools. So that here, if not before, the essential meaning must be insisted upon as something distinct from a translation substitute. Here, if not before, we must know that *petere* means aim at and *ponere* set down. Once interested in the essential meaning of Latin words, the variation of that meaning by context and the possibilities of expressing it in English, one is well started on one of those happy roads that never come to an end. Which of us is not still trying to get a better rendering for some particular *studium* or *virtus*, and still hoping to find precisely the right expression some day? When one's students set out upon this quest, one gets a strong sense of intellectual comradeship with them.

It seems, then, that the whole process of learning to translate Latin is a gradual and progressive liberation of the mind, in which realities emerge and detach themselves from what is accidental or unimportant in their outward form. The student begins in a kind of mental bondage, partly to the literalism inseparable from youth, partly to his own language, whose forms and habits are identical to him with thought itself. But when he has learned to translate Latin even as well as he may, under favorable conditions, in our schools, when he has learned to treat syntax freely but never lawlessly, to accept and find at last rational and helpful a thing at first so repellent to his unconscious instincts as Latin order, and to recognize by constant comparison of the Latin and the English vocabulary that all words are more or less unsuccessful attempts to express thought, he has gone a long way toward mental enfranchisement, he is to a certain extent at least the master and not the slave of language. When by a growing power to read he comes to see his original clearly, he feels increasing dissatisfaction with his own attempts to copy it, and I know of nothing more hopeful for English work than the intensity of effort to which translation, as it were, provokes and challenges the more intelligent students.

Little has been said about ways and means. Prob-

ably, as Kipling said of tribal lays, "there are nine and sixty ways" of teaching translation and "every single one of them is right". But I venture to say that no one of the sixty-nine can be applied with the best effect without the constant effort to put one's self mentally in the student's place and to guide him along, without pausing, it is true, but also without haste or impatience.

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REVIEWS

Euripides and the Spirit of His Dramas. By Paul Decharme, translated by James Loeb. New York: The Macmillan Co. (1906). Pp. xxii + 392. \$3.00.

The late Professor Decharme's *Euripide et L'Esprit de son Theatre* (1893) is widely known among students of Euripides. This analysis of Euripides' temperament, intellectual tendencies and dramatic work rests on a more profound study of the dramas themselves than has characterized any that preceded it.

Though to the most tragic of poets the Athenians themselves and posterity alike have granted but the third place among Greek tragedians, his work has been more widely read, studied and discussed than that of any other Greek dramatist and in a sense his plays are popular to-day. At the present time the psychology of the Euripidean dramas appears to interest the cultivated public more than the perfection of Sophocles or the grandeur of Aeschylus. Attacks on his art and morals are no longer in fashion; Professor Decharme points out that it is equally absurd to criticize him for the innovations in the construction of his dramas and for his philosophic attitude toward the myths about the Olympians which constituted the popular religion of his day.

Euripides and Socrates both were accused of corrupting the young and of teaching atheism. Plato interpreted Socrates for the after-world in such fashion that he has come to connote almost perfect goodness and wisdom. Euripides was less fortunate; he had as his exponent not the great philosopher but Aristophanes, the greatest genius that ever wrote comedy, *advocatus diaboli* indeed in his case as in that of Socrates.

Professor Decharme deplors the fact that the Aristophanic judgment of Euripides has still too wide currency even among those who love the tragic poet. This book shows abundantly how in these latter days Euripides has come into his own after the period in which bitter vituperation of him was in fashion in Germany (with the great exception of Goethe) and in other lands where Ger-

man scholarship was followed blindly. In the first part of the work the critical spirit of Euripides is examined, in the second his dramatic genius is studied. Stress is laid on the fact that the critical spirit of Euripides, which led to his being called the philosopher of the stage, determined his feeling toward the philosophy as toward the religious, social and political questions of the day; Euripides openly opposed narrow and unintelligent formalism and labored for the emancipation of the Greek mind.

In general one can only agree with Professor Decharme's statement and admire its lucidity and the depth of scholarship it reveals. Occasionally, however, we must take issue with him. For example he regards pessimism as one of the characteristics of Euripidean philosophy. Euripides did indeed tend to question deeply all things human and a melancholy tinge was thus given to his thought; we nevertheless feel that a better word can be found to denote his feeling for the sorrows of humanity. It is rather pity, that emotion which found its crowning expression in the Troades, lately characterized as "perhaps in European literature the first great expression of the spirit of pity for mankind, exalted into a moving principle". This quality, not that inert and despairing thing called pessimism, colors the passages adduced by Professor Decharme; it is this quality that, in Aristotle's famous phrase, makes him the most tragic of poets. Again, the author speaks of Euripides' aversion to women, which he ascribes in part to the alarming progress which at that time the authority of women was making in Athenian households. In spite of his explanations we can not feel that the portrayal of the wife Alcestis, the sisters Iphigenia and Electra, the girls Macaria and Polyxena hated womankind. Our author has here committed the error which he rightly condemns in others, that of determining the views of Euripides from passages, often fragments, taken at random from his text, appropriate enough in the mouth of the speaker, but not to be regarded as expressions of the poet's own opinion (cf. e. g. Jason's tirade against women). Further, Professor Decharme adduces no evidence to disprove Wilamowitz' dictum that no woman had any influence in Athens save "die Jungfrau von der Burg".

In discussing the political views of Euripides the author is rightly on his guard against finding political allusions everywhere. Occasionally, however, he leaves a passage entirely pointless, though a political interpretation is obvious or probable. For example, he denies that the famous passage in the *Phoenissae* about exile has any reference to the case of Alcibiades. He argues that an allusion made in a play of 406, nearly a year after the return of Alcibiades, would have lacked interest.

The date of the *Phoenissae* is a vexed question but the termini for it are the years 411-406; throughout all those years the exiles and return of Alcibiades formed a theme of burning interest at Athens. In Aristophanes' play of 406, in Alcibiades' second exile the city is in turmoil with the question what to do with her son whom she loves and hates and longs for. It seems hardly possible that Euripides, in composing this passage, should not have thought of this great exile, whom he had oved. Surely *συνασφείν τοῖς μὴ σοφοῖς* is applicable not to an exile from Boeotian Thebes, but to one from the city which Pericles called the school of Hellas. Again Professor Decharme dismisses with too much scorn the attempt to identify the chiefs described in the *Suppliants* with contemporary Athenian statesmen. The description has a historical rather than an epic character, and it seems very probable that contemporaries of Euripides are described, though we are not able to fix upon them with certainty.

In the second part of the work the art of Euripides is considered as an original and innovating form. Two of the most interesting points are the discussion of divine interventions and the consideration of the prologues. These are explained and defended in two valuable chapters. The last part of the book, which takes up the choral passages and the monodies, constitutes an important accompaniment to Masqueray's more technical discussion.

Professor Decharme has been fortunate in his translator, who evidently commands the three languages the knowledge of which is necessary to successful translation of a book like this. Occasional lapses there are. The sentence "Thus Telephus came upon the stage dressed like a poor devil" gives a ludicrous effect not present in the French phrase. The somewhat close translation of *assez* on p. 367, by which Aristophanes' magnificent parodies of Euripides are termed "rather amusing", seems not quite fairly to represent the spirit of the French. Again we need not be purists to object to "motivate". But these and similar small details do not impair the value of the whole. It is matter for congratulation that the admirable work of Professor Decharme is accessible in such an excellent English form.

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Essential Latin Lessons. By Arthur W. Roberts and John C. Rolfe. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1906). Pp. xiii + 363. \$1.00.

Inasmuch as the office of the reviewer is to confute as well as to criticize, let it be premised that the writer confesses to prejudices. What these are he hopes to make so plain that not only shall his